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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 SANAA 000415

SIPDIS

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DEPT FOR DS/IP, DS/IP/NEA, DS/IP/OPO/FPD, DS/ICI/RFJ,  
DS/IP/ITA, DS/ICI/CI, DS/ICI/PII, S/CT, NEA/EX, D, P, DS,  
CA, INR, CENTCOM FOR POLAD

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TAGS: [AEMR](#) [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [CASC](#) [YM](#) [EAC](#)

SUBJECT: SANAA EAC MEETING

REF: A. 05 STATE 35169

[B.](#) 05 SANAA 557

[C.](#) SANAA 266

[D.](#) SANAA 306

[E.](#) SANAA 349

Classified By: RSO William Mellott for reasons 1.4 (b), (c) and (d)

SUMMARY. (S/NF) DCM convened the Embassy's EAC on 02/19/06, to discuss the ongoing situation concerning the 23 escaped Al-Qaida members. EAC discussed the immediate security and personal safety concerns of the embassy and its employees. EAC also discussed residential local guards and the Rewards for Justice (RFJ) program. Members in attendance were DCM, RSO, POLM, OMC, DAO, POLE, CONS, FBI, AID, FPD.

[1.](#) (S/NF) EAC was briefed by all relevant agencies and sections on the situation, 17 days after the reported escape of the Al-Qaida prisoners. Members were advised that none of the escapees had been captured as yet and their whereabouts were still unknown. NOTE: (Post has subsequently been advised that two of the escapees have turned themselves in). Relevant office and section heads advised that the ROYG has been cooperative in sharing what information there is, but that there was nothing new to report at this time.

[2.](#) (S/NF) EAC members agreed that the security and travel restrictions put in place in RefTel's were still warranted in light of the lack of information concerning the whereabouts of the escapees. Personal security and travel restrictions agreed to by the EAC are as follows:

[A.](#) Embassy personnel are strongly urged to maintain a low profile in Sana'a until the capture of the escapees or information of their whereabouts are learned. Unnecessary travel to the Bab al-Yemen, local neighborhoods, shopping and social venues and areas on the outskirts of Sana'a should be curtailed. Post personnel are reminded to avoid numerous trips to grocery stores and other venues frequented by Westerners. All personnel were reminded to vary their routes and times to and from work.

[B.](#) Limit all non-essential travel within or to Yemen. Official travel outside of Sana'a will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Travel to Yemen by official Americans will also be considered on a case-by-case basis. The RSO and section heads will review all travel and TDY requests and make recommendations to the DCM.

[C.](#) All American employees will be allowed flex time and access to armored shuttles.

[D.](#) Local Guard Force, Residential Guards and ROYG residential security forces will be alerted and will maintain a heightened security posture.

[E.](#) RSO will notify ROYG security forces to increase vigilance at the three approved hotels used by official American personnel.

[F.](#) All embassy personnel were reminded by the RSO to maintain vigilance and immediately report any incident that seems suspicious or unusual to the RSO office or Post 1.

[G.](#) EAC agreed that the most recent Warden Message adequately reflected the situation and no change was necessary at present.

[3.](#) (S/NF) EAC members discussed timelines and potential tripwires and all agreed that the one month mark would be the point at which discussion on future security restrictions and an enhanced embassy response might be warranted. All EAC members agreed that, absent significant numbers of the escapees captured or information concerning their whereabouts, post would have to make changes in the operation of the mission and the security of its personnel. EAC members felt that the longer the terrorists were at large, the more likely they were to start planning operations against the embassy and its personnel.

14. (S/NF) EAC agreed to continue monitoring the situation and to liaise with their ROYG counterparts on the situation. Members agreed to reconvene if any information was received that increased the threat to the embassy or it's personnel. Post will immediately report developments as they occur.

15. (SBU) RSO advised that the issue of reduced residential local guard coverage discussed in 2005, RefTel's A and B, is again under review by DS/IP/OPO/FPD. The issue of 24/7 residential local guard coverage first broached by DSS/IP/OPO/FPD in 2005 concerned post's residential guard staffing being over standards for our threat ratings. Post has maintained the position that our unique situation, even before the recent escape of 23 Al-Qaida prisoners, requires an exception to the guidelines and post must keep 24/7 residential guards. The EAC unanimously agreed that guard coverage should not be reduced and voiced strong objections to the matter even being considered during these turbulent times. RSO advised he was in the process of writing a post response on the issue, EAC demanded RSO include their strong feelings on the subject.

16. (S/NF) RSO advised EAC that DS/ICI/RFJ, Rewards for Justice program, made contact with the RSO office and advised that rewards for two of the escapees, Al-Banna and Al-Badawi, were still available. EAC agreed that advertising in the local newspapers, press releases, advertising campaign and posters may be effective in attaining information on the two subjects, but decided to check with the ROYG on the feasibility of such a campaign in Yemen. RSO advised the EAC of the possibility of including some of the other escapees in the RFJ program, if they met the criteria. EAC agreed that avenue was worth exploring.

Krajeski